

Message Text

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ACTION IO-11

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TAGS: AORG APER UN

SUBJ: G-LEVEL SALARY NEGOTIATIONS AT IMPASSE

SUMMARY: JOINT WORKING GROUP SET UP FOLLOWING STRIKE SETTLEMENT TO CONSIDER HOW BATTELLE SURVEY TO BE ANALYZED AND IMPLEMENTED IS AT IMPASSE AND NOT LIKELY TO MEET APRIL 15 DEADLINE WHEN ITS RECOMMENDATIONS DUE. IT APPEARS TO US AGENCY HEADS OF GENEVA ORGANIZATIONS ARE BECOMING RESIGNED TO PROSPECT DECISION, IN EFFECT, WILL BE TAKEN FOR THEM IN NEW YORK (TO GRANT INCREASES TO UN OFFICE GENEVA STAFF), IN WHICH CASE THEY SEE NO CHOICE BUT TO CONFORM. AS FOR IMPASSE IN NEGOTIATIONS WITH STAFF, THEY ARE IN A TRAP, LARGELY OF THEIR OWN MAKING, AND ONE FROM WHICH THEY ARE NOT LIKELY TO BE EXTRICATED UNLESS SOME NEW ELEMENT IS INTRODUCED. END SUMMARY.

1. BY ALL ACCOUNTS WORKING GROUP COMPOSED OF ADMINISTRATION AND STAFF REPS IS AT IMPASSE IN NEGOTIATIONS AIMED AT FINDING COMMON GROUND ON HOW BATTELLE INSTITUTE SURVEY OF G-LEVEL SALARY SCALE IS TO BE "ANALYZED" AND IMPLEMENTED. UNDER TERMS OF STRIKE SETTLEMENT LAST MONTH WORKING GROUP IS REQUIRED TO REPORT ITS RECOMMENDATIONS BY APRIL 15, BUT BOTH SIDES ARE PESSIMISTIC

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ABOUT MEETING THIS DEADLINE OR, INDEED, ABOUT REACHING

ANY AGREED RECOMMENDATION. RUMORS ARE HEARD OF RENEWED STRIKE PLANS AND OF STRIKE SPREADING THIS TIME BEYOND PALAIS STAFF.

2. MORE DISTURBING IS DEFEATIST POSTURE ADMINISTRATIONS APPEAR TO HAVE ASSUMED. AS CHARACTERIZED TO US UNSYMPATHETICALLY BY WIPO DIRECTOR GENERAL BOGSCH AGENCY HEADS HAVE ALL BUT THROWN IN THE TOWEL BECAUSE, IF NEGOTIATED SETTLEMENT CANNOT BE ACHIEVED IN GENEVA, DECISION WITH RESPECT TO UN OFFICE STAFF MUST BE TAKEN IN NEW YORK, WHERE THEY ANTICIPATE ISSUE WILL SEEM LESS IMPORTANT, YET OTHER ORGANIZATIONS WILL THEN FIND THEMSELVES COMPELLED TO GO ALONG WITH WHATEVER INCREASES NEW YORK MAY AGREE TO FOR UN OFFICE STAFF. OBVIOUSLY STAFF ASSOCIATIONS ARE NOT BLIND TO THIS, AND STAFF PRESSURE IS KEPT MOST INTENSE AT PALAIS.

3. WHAT WE HAVE, IN EFFECT, IS SITUATION OF INDUSTRY-WIDE BARGAINING IN WHICH STAFF ASSOCIATIONS PROBABLY ARE BETTER ORGANIZED THAN ADMINISTRATIONS TO ENGAGE AND DECIDE COLLECTIVELY, IF GENEVA NEGOTIATIONS ARE UNPRODUCTIVE AND ISSUE GOES BY DEFAULT TO NEW YORK, DECISION WOULD THEN BE TAKEN BY THE ONLY HEADQUARTERS DISTANT FROM LOCAL SCENE, AND IT WOULD BE TAKEN BY THE ADMINISTRATION LEAST AFFECTED PROPORTIONATELY BY ITS FINANCIAL CONSEQUENCES, SINCE GENEVA SALARIES REPRESENT ONLY PORTION UN SALARIES AS AGAINST PREPONDERANCE OF SALARIES FOR GENEVA-BASED AGENCIES.

4. NOT SURPRISINGLY, UNDER THESE CIRCUMSTANCES SOLIDARITY AMONG AGENCY HEADS APPEARS TO BE BREAKING AS IMPASSE WITHIN WORKING GROUP CONTINUES AND FOREGOING PROSPECT BEGINS TO APPEAR INCREASINGLY TO BE THE LIKELY SCENARIO. WE ARE TOLD THAT WHO DIRECTOR GENERAL HAS DECIDED, PRIVATELY AS YET, TO WASH HIS HANDS OF FURTHER INVOLVEMENT IN THE ISSUE AND LEAVE IT TO THE UN TO DECIDE. (HE TOLD US HE IS ADAMANTLY OPPOSED TO ABSORBING THE FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS OF SUCH A SETTLEMENT IN HIS PRESENT OR PROPOSED BUDGETS, AND HIS PRESENT INTENTION IS SIMPLY TO SUBMIT THE BILL TO THE WORLD HEALTH ASSEMBLY LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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IN MAY IF TRAPPED INTO G-LEVEL SALARY INCREASES AND THEIR RETROACTIVITY.) REPORTS HAVE IT THAT ILO DIRECTOR GENERAL BLANCHARD IS ALREADY ENGAGED IN CONFIDENTIAL DISCUSSION WITH ILO STAFF LEADERS ABOUT A PERCENTAGE INCREASE, EVEN WHILE ILO IS PARTICIPATING IN JOINT NEGOTIATIONS IN WORKING GROUP. BOGSCH IS DISMAYED BY INCOHERENCE FROM SIDE OF ADMINISTRATIONS IN THEIR APPROACH TO NEGOTIATIONS (AND PRIVATELY GRATIFIED

HE WAS NOT PARTY TO SALARY SURVEY DECISIONS WHICH
PRECIPITATED PROBLEM).

5. WHILE ISSUE IS NOT NOW FORMALLY BEFORE APRIL 7-9
MEETING HERE OF ACC, NUMBER OF AGENCY HEADS ARE PRESSING
FOR THIS, ACCORDING TO BOGSCH, WHO IS CONFIDENT ISSUE
CANNOT BE DUCKED AT ACC GATHERING IN ANY CASE, WHETHER
ADDRESSED FORMALLY OR NOT. HIS CONSULTATIONS HAVE NOT
PERSUADED HIM TO HOPE, HOWEVER, THAT SCENARIO WHEREBY
THE WEAKEST LINK (UN OFFICE) WILL BE BROKEN BY MORE
RELAXED DECISION TAKEN IN NEW YORK CAN BE AVERTED.
JUST AS AGENCY HEADS APPEAR TO HAVE RESIGNED SELVES TO
PROSPECT THAT DECISION FOR THEIR AGENCIES WILL, IN FACT,
LIKELY BE TAKEN IN NEW YORK, WE SENSE GROWING DISPOSITION
AMONG THEM, TOO, TO ASSUME THAT GOVERNMENTS MAY BE
EXPECTED TO ACCEPT FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS OF THIS DECISION
AS SOMETHING BEYOND CONTROL OF EVERYBODY.

6. AS MISSION'S PREVIOUS REPORTING HAS ATTEMPTED TO
POINT OUT, WHILE ADMINISTRATIONS MAY NOT BE TO BLAME
FOR LOCAL ECONOMIC CIRCUMSTANCES, THE TRAP IN WHICH
THEY NOW FIND THEMSELVES IN G-LEVEL SALARY NEGOTIATIONS
IS ONE THEY MORE OR LESS CARELESSLY SET FOR THEMSELVES.
THEY WALKER TO TRAP BY TAKING EASY WAY OUT YEAR AGO WHEN
THEY DID NOT REQUIRE RE-EXAMINATION OF OL METHODOLOGY
BEFORE LAUNCHING 1975 SALARY SURVEY. (NEGOTIATING
PROBLEM WITH STAFF AT THAT STAGE, WHILE POSSIBLY LONG
AND DIFFICULT, WOULD AT LEAST HAVE BEEN FEASIBLE, AND
MINOR BY COMPARISON WITH IMPASSE NEGOTIATIONS NOW ARE AT).
THEY FELL INTO THEIR OWN TRAP BY EXACTING PRIOR PLEDGE
FROM STAFF ASSOCIATIONS THAT "THE RESULTS OF THE SURVEY
SHOULD BE BINDING ON BOTH SIDES". INDEED THEY SUPPLIED
THE STAFF WITH ITS STRONGEST PRESENT ARGUMENT BY REQUIRING
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THAT THE PLEDGE AGREED TO BY BOTH SIDES GO BEYOND
THIS AND AFFIRM THAT "THE SURVEY WOULD BE MEANINGLESS
IF THERE WAS NO FIRM ADVANCE COMMITMENT TO ADHERE TO ITS
CONCLUSIONS.

7. IT IS HARD TO SEE HOW THE AGENCY HEADS CAN GET
OUT OF THE TRAP AND AWAY FROM THE DEFEATIST ROUTE
THEY ARE ON, UNLESS SOME NEW ELEMENT IS INTRODUCED TO
EXTRICATE THEM, AND THE ONLY NEW ELEMENT WE CAN ENVISAGE
CAPABLE OF DOING SO WOULD BE PRESSURE BY GOVERNMENTS IN
SOME FORM.

8. OUR RECOMMENDATIONS FOLLOW BY SEPTEL. DALE

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